

A PERUVIAN PARADISE ~~~~~ A COMPLETE NOVELETTE

Continued from Page 3, This Section.

pect," rejoined Ford, laughing. "The disappointment, if we shouldn't bring back the treasure, will be all the greater if you do."

"Don't you worry, sir," said the trader with emphasis. "If there's gold in them 'Is yonder like that Senor Rodriguez showed us, Hi'm goin' to 'ave my share, an' don't you forget it!"

In a short time they got the llamas started up the trail, and with Fitch in the lead and the Spaniard, leaning on Keeth's arm, hobbling along in the rear, moved on Hualpa. The little mountain settlement was reached just at dusk. Their entrance was scarcely noticed, and they smuggled Rodriguez into a back room of the hotel without attracting the least attention. They were anxious that their wounded acquaintance should not be recognized by any of the party of Indians who had attacked him, if they were lurking about the town.

Fitch made a bargain with a returning trader, who happened to be at the posada, to take his whole stock, and got rid of his llamas as well. Through the same agent Jose Rodriguez sold one of his bars of gold, with the proceeds of which he purchased an outfit for the proposed journey into the interior of the Sierras. The other bars he deposited with a fellow countryman living at Hualpa.

Rodriguez's wound having nearly healed at the end of a week, and he having recovered from the fatigues of his experience in the mountains, preparations were made for an immediate start upon what they were careful to make public was a search for nitrate beds. Keeth, whose firm was well known in the town, took command, and his presence gave color to the avowed intentions of the party. But it was left to Fitch to engage a guide, for he had had the longer experience in dealing with the Indians.

And he found a man who more than satisfied Keeth and Ford Kinsale. Neither of them had ever seen such a big man among the Indians of the coast. Fitch declared him to be a member of an interior tribe—one which he had occasionally traded with—far superior in point of intelligence as well as in form and feature to the natives who make up the bulk of Hualpa's population. Rodriguez expressed no opinion of the guide at all. In fact, he did not see him until the party were ready to leave the posada on the morning of departure.

The Indian was known by the name of Manuel, he having probably been baptized into the Catholic Church by some wandering priest when a child. Nominally all the native Peruvians are under priestly control, although their ignorance of religious, as well as other matters, is appalling. He was a man fully six feet in height—as tall as Ronald Keeth himself—with a mighty chest and arms like a gladiator. He wore a loose tunic of cured skin, sandals, and very little else. His right shoulder was untrammelled by even the sack-like tunic, but the garment was belted in at the waist and fell nearly to his knees. He carried a long knife in his belt and a spear for a staff. His long black hair made other covering for his head unnecessary, and the thongs of his sandals, wound round and round his ankles, protected those parts from the rocks.

He professed himself entirely familiar with the Sierras for a hundred leagues to the north of Hualpa and agreed to guide the party directly to the spot where the three pines overhung the gorge. For a small sum in addition he offered to carry one of them the entire distance in a chair, or cradle, such as these mountaineers often bear upon their shoulders. But none of the four cared to travel in that precarious way.

"Hi've rid on one of these fellows' backs," said Fitch; "but one trip was enough. Hi was sicker than w'en I come across from Lunnun ten year ago. A man don't feel safe swingin' over precipices a thousand feet deep with nothin' but a strap around a Hinjun's 'ead a-holdin' of 'im on."

They left Hualpa early one morning and set out over a trail to the north, a path which showed for the first few miles that it was much traveled. Each one in the party carried a pack strapped to his shoulders, and Keeth bore a coil of small, though very stout, hemp rope. The four Europeans were heavily armed, and Ford, because of his inexperience, and Fitch, because of his blind contempt for the inhabitants of the mountains, felt confident that they would be more than a match for any party of wild Indians which might attack them. Jose Rodriguez assured them that the tribe who had held him captive so long knew nothing of the use of firearms, spears and great war clubs.

"W'y," cried Fitch in talking it over, "we can go right in, harmed as we are, hand drive the 'ole crowd hout of the mountains."

But the Spaniard shook his head. There were places in the mountains, he knew, where a man with merely a bow and arrows could hold a whole army at bay.

Before they stopped for their noon meal the guide led them off the main trail into a side path which was much more arduous to follow. It wound up and up among the rocks, occasionally crossing an almost level plateau, then winding about the base of a peak which, snow covered to the summit, towered far above them among the clouds. The atmosphere among these peaks was chill, and at night they were glad to descend beyond the ridge into a clump of hardy trees and build

a huge campfire before which to stretch themselves for rest.

It had been the hardest day's march Ford had ever experienced, but it told the most upon the trader, whose figure was too corpulent to make walking a pleasure. Poor Fitch fell asleep immediately after supper and slept right on until nearly morning, when, in common with the others, he was awakened by an entirely unlooked for incident.

When the party had sought their blankets (the guide assured them there was no necessity of standing watch), the stars were shining brightly in an unclouded sky; but they awoke just before sunrise in the midst of a mountain tempest. The thunder was roaring overhead and the lightning crackling from peak to peak, illuminating the gorge in which they were encamped with an unearthly, flickering light.

Then came the rain—not in drops, or in sheets, but simply pouring out of the heart of a cloud which had torn its way across the face of a neighboring peak. It was a cloudburst in earnest, and in an instant they were all wet to the skin. There was no shelter at hand from the furious downfall, and all they could do was to huddle under the shelter of the side of the gorge and make a tent of his blanket, covering himself completely.

In a little while the tiny stream at the bottom of the gorge had become a rushing, roaring torrent, sweeping boulders, fallen timber, and all sorts of debris down its course. But the stream subsided as fast as it had gathered strength when the storm ceased.

The rising sun found them in a drenched and saturated state. There was no dry wood and every vestige of their fire had been swept away.

"Tassajo and left over cakes don't make a very appetizing breakfast, do they?" said Ford ruefully. "But this must be part of the 'roughing it' I wanted, I suppose." Then he looked at Rodriguez and suddenly burst out laughing.

"What do you find to laugh at?" demanded Keeth, who had been rummaging over his pack to see that all was right.

But Ford brought himself up suddenly in the middle of his laugh and glanced around at Manuel, the guide. He stood a little way off with his eyes fixed intently upon Jose's unconscious face. The sudden rainfall had played sad havoc with the Spaniard's "make-up." The grease paint was washed completely off in streaks, and the cabalistic mark upon his cheek was plainly visible.

The instant the Indian saw Ford's eyes turned upon him he withdrew his own gaze from the Spaniard's face and went about some unimportant task as coolly as though he had seen nothing. But young Kinsale was confident that he had noted the tattoo mark.

His thoughtless laughter had called Keeth's attention to the havoc made by the storm, and he pointed it out to the trader.

"Confound him! I 'ope that bloomin' Hinjun didn't notice it," muttered the Englishman, snatching up his paints and beckoning Jose to go with him.

"But he did," Ford declared to his friend. "If there's any truth in the yarn that all these Indians understand the meaning of the mark, we'd better keep a mighty sharp watch on Manuel yonder."

But the guide seemed entirely oblivious of the accident. When Jose and Fitch returned, the former with the damage repaired, the Indian did not vouchsafe him a glance. But Keeth took pains to place Rodriguez on his guard.

"Eet ees a misfortune, but what can one do now—eh, what-at?" he asked, with a shrug of his shoulders.

After their frugal meal they set off on the blind trail, which Manuel seemed to follow more by instinct than by sight. If the first day's jaunt had been arduous this was doubly so. They made scarcely ten miles from sunrise to sunset. The grandeur of the scenery in these Peruvian Andes cannot be surpassed even in the Himalayas; but grand scenery could not make poor Fitch forget the toils of the journey.

After the occurrence of the early morning the white men watched their guide very closely. They feared he would play them some trick, and to be left alone in this wild region, with but a fleeting remembrance of the path over which they had come, was not a pleasant possibility.

"Eet how the dickens will we find our way back, anyway?" demanded Ford, as they talked the matter over. "That is a risk we must run if we would find the Incas' cave, I take it," replied Keeth. "But what do you think, Senor Rodriguez? Shouldn't we have reached the three pines you spoke of before this?"

"We cannot be a great way from them now, if the man is not playing us false," replied the Spaniard. "But I have yet to see the first familiar landmark."

The pines were not sighted that day, but upon being questioned Manuel declared that he would get them to the place by the middle of the next forenoon. For fear that he contemplated treason, it was agreed that one of the white men should remain awake all night, and this watch was faithfully kept.

Soon after leaving their second night's camping place they began to descend into a deep valley. The sides of the mountain were heavily timbered, and Manuel led them through

the pathless forest as unerringly as the crow flies. Just before noon they came out upon a high bluff overlooking a swiftly flowing river, several rods across. As soon as they came out of the timber, Jose Rodriguez uttered an exclamation of satisfaction.

"Eet is the same," he muttered. "I could not be mistak'."

"Recognize the place, do you?" demanded Keeth, who walked beside him.

"Si, senor. We be not far from the pines, and the wonderful bridge of which I tol' you."

Manuel set off up the stream, which flowed three or four hundred feet below them. It rapidly narrowed until, just after passing a sharp bend, they reached a spot where it was scarcely a dozen yards across. A few rods before them the three huge pine trees leaned over the gulf from the opposite bank. Near the trees a great log, surely three feet thick at the butt, spanned the abyss.

"For heaven's sake," cried Keeth, "what manner of men must have been the people who placed that timber in position?"

"Ah, I knew the senor would be surprised," said Rodriguez, showing his teeth in a smile. "Eet eet not wonderful—eh, what? That, Senor Feetch," he added, turning to the trader, "was done by these same savages whom you profess to think so poorly of."

Then in a low voice, that the guide might not hear, and with a wave of his hand toward the opposite mountain slope: "Beyond that stream lies the country of the tribe with whom I lived so long. We must not let this man go farther wit' us."

"But what shall we do?" demanded Keeth. "How will we get rid of him?"

"Let us cross and camp for a noon meal. I will find some way to rid us of his presence."

"But can we find our way back without him?" asked Ford.

"That we must reesk."

"Go ahead," said Fitch, recklessly. "Hi'm goin' to see this 'ere thing through, wotever comes."

But when they reached the bridge

blinded eyes. But neither the Indian nor his victim came to the surface again.

CHAPTER IV.

TRAPPED.

With limbs which almost refused to bear him up, Keeth finally crept to the end of the log and stood upon the solid rock. Ford and the trader were but a moment behind him. In their excitement they crossed the vaulting gulf with scarcely a tremor; but the engineer was so dizzy and ill he could scarcely stand.

"Poor Jose!" exclaimed Ford Kinsale. "We should have kept a closer watch on that fiendish savage."

"What an awful death!" murmured Keeth, still unable to look over the cliff's edge without shuddering.

"But wot are we goin' to do now?" demanded Fitch.

"Come," said the engineer, shaking himself together. "We must find some way to descend this bluff. We must find Jose's body and give it decent burial, at least. The river is full of eddies and snags. It may be along shore there."

"We've got ourselves to think of first," objected Fitch.

"Oh, come along; let's be unselfish," said Ford. "The poor chap is dead, of course; but, as Keeth says, we may recover the body. I believe he'd done as much for one of us. I must say he was the only Spaniard I ever cottoned to."

Keeth was already examining the rugged face of the bluff. It was not all rock; there were some treacherous looking gravel slopes. In a few moments he began to descend, and his comrades, trusting themselves to his leadership, followed. He had found the only place in the bluff, as far as they could see, where descent was possible; but when they got within thirty feet or so of the foot, they were forced to halt. From that point the place was a sheer precipice, so smooth that a mountain goat could not have found a foothold.

AN INDIAN'S TREACHERY—EXTRACT FROM CHAPTER III.

"Suddenly Jose tore his other arm loose. Instantly his freed fingers sought his belt, he drew the knife, and like a flash struck it into the guide's breast! The Indian staggered back, but not for an instant did his grip about his antagonist's body relax."

"Gathering his waning powers for one desperate effort, he sprang forward to the edge of the cliff and pitched headfirst into the gulf, carrying the Spaniard with him!"

"They whirled over and over in the air as they descended, striking the water with a mighty splash at last, and disappeared beneath the surface. Keeth fell face downward upon the timber, and clung there with both arms outstretched, striving to pierce the swiftly flowing water with tear-blinded eyes. But neither the Indian nor his victim came to the surface again."

even Ronald Keeth shrank from crossing it.

"Ah, senors, eet ees simple," exclaimed Rodriguez, noting their hesitancy.

He motioned Manuel to lead the way and leaped upon the end of the timber himself. The guide started across the gulf as nonchalantly as though he were crossing a perfectly secure bridge with a hand rail on either side instead of a tree trunk which quivered and shook with every step. The Spaniard followed close on his heels.

"Hold on, let's see how they get across," said Keeth, and he and his two friends watched Jose and the guide with intense interest.

But they crossed without mishap, and immediately upon feeling the soil and rock beneath his feet Jose turned and swung his hat encouragingly. For an instant his back was turned to the guide. That instant was evidently the opportunity for which Manuel had been waiting.

Before Keeth or his comrades could utter the warning shout which rose to their lips the huge Indian had seized the slight form of the Spaniard about the waist. He pinioned one arm, but Jose must have possessed muscles of steel. He twisted about in the giant's grasp and seized him in turn by the throat. Neither could draw his knife and for a moment they swayed and struggled on the verge of the precipice.

Uttering a loud shout Keeth, forgetting the swaying bridge, sprang upon the log and ran toward the scene of the battle. He drew his pistol from its sheath as he went, but he dared not fire, the men were so closely interlocked. The timber swayed frightfully beneath his feet, but he scarcely noticed the vibration. His eyes were on that struggling pair. He saw nothing else.

Suddenly Jose tore his other arm loose. Instantly his freed fingers sought his belt, he drew the knife, and like a flash struck it into the guide's breast! The Indian staggered back, but not for an instant did his grip about his antagonist's body relax. Gathering his waning powers for one desperate effort, he sprang forward to the edge of the cliff and pitched headfirst into the gulf, carrying the Spaniard with him!

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"Got us him a box, Mr. Keeth, you 'ave," declared Fitch.

"Oh, dry up," said Ford. "We can go back and try again."

"Hi don't try no more," declared the trader, with emphasis. "Hi've got enough. It looks like we wouldn't be able to crawl back hup there any'ow."

"We won't talk about getting up till we've got down," said Keeth quietly, and he began to uncoil the rope he carried.

"There you have it!" exclaimed Ford. "I'd forgotten the rope. Here's just the place to fasten it."

A huge boulder, sunk deep in the bluff, hung over the narrow beach below. Keeth quickly knotted one end of the cable over this projecting rock and then swung down the remaining distance to the verge of the river. Ford and the trader quickly followed him.

The shore was not a dozen feet broad at any point within their view, and the river raced along with a sullen murmur. The water was low now. In time of freshet the river doubtless filled its bed from bluff to bluff, entirely covering the narrow strip of shingle. They had made the descent of the bank some distance below the bridge. There were plenty of little eddies near the shore, and great, black snags reached their ugly limbs far out into the river; but the thing which they hoped to find caught among these obstructions did not appear. The treacherous guide and his victim, locked in that awful embrace, seemed to have sunk to the bottom of the stream and remained there.

They searched the margin of the river as far down as they could go. At the sharp bend half a mile or so below the bridge the shore ceased. They could go no farther. The bluff above them looked forbidding and unscalable. The only path by which they might return to the summit was the one down which they had scrambled.

"Come, we may as well go back," said Keeth in despair. "Poor Jose is beyond our reach."

"You fellows will 'ave to 'elp me hup that rope," declared Fitch, gloomily. "This cliff climbing ain't wot Hi'm built for."

"Oh, we'll get you up all right," said Ford. "What we'll do when we are up again is what's bothering me."

"Hit looks to me as though we was in a box—that wot it looks like."

"Don't you believe we can find our way back to Hualpa?" inquired Keeth.

"Mebbe," replied Fitch. "But Hi know bloomin' well we can't find the treasure cave, now the Dago's gone."

"All you think of is the treasure," said Ford, in disgust.

"That's wot we started hout for," returned the trader, stoutly. "Hit's

blessed awkward that Jose was killed, if 'ee 'ad to be killed, before 'ee told us 'ow to get to the cave."

"You're a cold-blooded chap, Fitch," But Keeth made no comment. They reached the point where the rope had been left dangling from the protruding boulder, and Keeth prepared to mount.

"I'll go up first and give you a lift, Ford. Together we can pull Mr. Fitch up, I guess."

He laid hold of the hemp and began to ascend hand over hand, bracing his feet against the rock as he went. He had not gone up a dozen feet, however, when something gave way above. He dropped several feet and the gravel and broken rock fell about him in a shower.

"Great Heavens, Keeth!" shouted Ford. "Come back! The whole cliff is falling!"

The trader caught him by the legs and pulled him down. Through the falling debris they could see the huge boulder, around which the rope had been fastened, toppling slowly outward. Ford and Fitch seized Keeth's hands and ran with him along the beach. An instant later the mass of rock had fallen directly upon the spot on which they had stood. Tons upon tons of earth and gravel followed the rock and a huge fissure was made in the bluff side.

When the noise ceased and the debris stopped falling the three adventurers gazed at one another with pallid faces. Not only had they narrowly escaped an awful death, but they were now stranded upon the margin of the river. The path to the summit of the bluff was obliterated!

"Trapped, by Jove!" exclaimed Ford.

But Keeth ran back to the heap of earth and rock and rescued the rope which had already been of such service to them.

"We won't say that till we try upstream," he said, returning to his comrades. "Come along."

"What do you think, Fitch?" demanded Ford.

Fitch may have been pessimistic as regarded small things, but now that

supposing even that it were not too deep to be waded. But Keeth was an ingenious fellow, and had experienced life in some of the wilder portions of the States before coming to Peru. He had accompanied a United States exploring expedition through Arizona and New Mexico before his twenty-first birthday, and had learned in those cattle raising countries something of the value of a thirty-foot rope. The instant he saw the stump he saw as well a way out of the present difficulty.

He caught up the coil of hemp, made a running noose, and planted his feet firmly on the edge of the water, preparatory to making a cast. "If the rope's long enough to reach, and that old stub holds, we're all right," he thought, as he swung the coils about his head.

It was a long cast, and the loop did not fall over the stub at the first or second trial; but Keeth was delighted to see it drop just where he wanted it to the next time. However, when he had drawn it taut, he found it so short that he could not fasten it at the side of the inlet, and he had to shout for his companions to help him. Ford and the Englishman came running, with their rifles in their hands, fully believing that he had been attacked by Indians; but they forgave him for disturbing their morning nap when they discovered what he had done.

"Hit's a great 'ead you 'ave, Mr. Keeth," declared Fitch. "Hi'd never thought of it."

"But will the stump hold?" asked Ford Kinsale.

"We'll all get hold of the line and try it," replied Keeth. "We know the rope is all right. If it holds, I'll cross over and help you fellows across."

The stub proved to be firmly set in the ground, and without waiting for breakfast Keeth removed his clothing and prepared to make the passage of the river. He wrapped his garments in his blanket, swathed his gunlock in oily rags, and slinging both bundle and weapon over his shoulder, plunged into the water. Ford hung to the end of the rope and steadied him, and although Keeth's feet were almost immediately swept from beneath him, he managed to reach the opposite shore without serious difficulty. He hurried into his damp clothing and helped Fitch across, and then flung the rope back to Ford, and, with the trader's assistance, drew his friend, and the provisions, over the flood.

"Well, I pray heaven we won't have to cross another such place," Kinsale panted, as they drew him to land. "I'm not half as anxious to see the Incas' cave as I was when poor Jose was telling us about it."

"I thought you were looking for lots of excitement this vacation," said Keeth slyly.

"Oh, we're having too much fun," declared Ford ruefully. "I didn't know what I was talking about. If ever I get back to Callao I shan't ask for another vacation for ten years."

They marched along the shingle for some miles further, fortunately finding it good travelling all the way; but it was nearly noon before they reached what seemed a promising path to the top of the cliffs. The foot of this trail was extremely rugged, but it looked better above, and with Keeth in the lead they started up. Before they had climbed fifty feet the path became quite easy to follow. In fact, it showed the hand of man in its construction.

It was a gradual incline, extending along the face of the bluff, becoming wider and wider as they mounted upward. There were marks of great chisels where slabs of the soft rock had been split off, and while still a hundred feet or more from the summit, the adventurers reached a place where the ancient constructors of the road had used the waste material to build a substantial wall, four feet or more in height, along the outer edge. Here the way was broad enough for four men to walk abreast. The rocks themselves, in fact, instead of the mortar, had crumbled with age.

"What do you think of such engineering as this?" demanded Ford.

"It is wonderful!" declared Keeth. "This must have been built three hundred years ago—possibly at a still more ancient date—yet the best work of civilized peoples to-day cannot surpass it. What giants those old Incas must have been, for they had no tools to aid them. This was all done by sheer bodily strength. They had no hoisting apparatus."

"And do you mean to say them Hinjuns did this?" cried Fitch.

"They certainly did," replied the engineer. "Probably the road was built about the time that Pizarro conquered the country."

Keeth shook his head over it. "They must 'ave been a deal different from the niggers Hi've been used to," he said.

"They were still more astonished when they had gone some rods further. On rounding a corner in the precipitous wall they found that the ancient workmen had tunneled a spur of rock to reach the summit of the cliff."

The tunnel was a dozen yards in length and opened out upon the plateau on top of the bluff. And right before the mouth of the tunnel were the ruins of several stone houses built against the side of the mountain.

"An ancient town—almost like the cliff dwellings I've seen in Colorado," declared Keeth. "Jose told us nothing about this. I wonder how far we are from the town of the Indians among

whom he was a captive? I only hope—"

He broke off with a startled exclamation. On the verge of the cliff, a few rods from the old tunnel, was the figure of a woman. She stood in a listening attitude, but her face turned away from the white men. Evidently she had heard their voices, but had not discovered from which direction they were approaching.

She was an Indian girl—almost a child in appearance—as lithe and graceful as a deer. Her skin was of a brilliant bronze hue, and a great mass of coal black hair hung to her waist; her head was guileless of other covering. She was dressed in a tunic-like garment which fell below her knees and was open at the throat, displaying the full roundness of her bosom. A broad sash of strange texture and brilliant hue held the garment together at her waist. Her feet were shod with sandals, over her shoulder was slung by a thong a quiver of arrows, and she held a short bow in her hand. In Keeth's startled vision she seemed a Diana in bronze.

He was speechless with amazement; but Ford and the trader, noticing the abrupt termination of their comrade's sentence, glanced up also. A sharp exclamation from the Englishman made the girl turn. She saw them, and wonder filled her face. Her great eyes, black as night, gazed deep into Keeth's own. Even in that brief instant he felt the magic of her glance.

But she remained motionless only a moment. Like a flash she flitted an arrow to her bow, and a wild, bird-like call burst from her lips. The arrow was trained full at Keeth's breast, and her brown fingers trembled on the string. He dared not move as she began to step lightly backward, her eyes still fixed upon him.

Suddenly Ford uttered a shout of warning. The girl, evidently forgetting the proximity of the cliff's brink, made a misstep. In a breath she had plunged backward into the abyss! The arrow flew high in the air, and a piercing cry reached the ears of her horrified audience as she disappeared.

"My God!" cried Ford; "she's gone!"

"She'll be dashed to bits on them rocks below!" said Fitch, his usually ruddy face perfectly colorless.

But Keeth ran forward to the brink of the precipice. He expected to see the poor creature's mangled body bounding from rock to rock to the foot of the cliff. Instead of the horrible picture which his imagination had conjured, he beheld her lying in the fan shaped top of a stunted tree which grew out of a fissure in the cliff just below him. Her bow had fallen from her hand and she lay, seemingly stunned, upon this insecure resting-place.

"Quick! knot that rope around me, under the arms," he commanded. "She may slip at any moment. Hang on the rope with all your might and don't let it chafe against the edge of the rock."

He divested himself of his coat and ammunition belt as he spoke, and in a moment was lowered over the brink. His feet scarcely gained a foothold on the rock, but Ford and the Englishman eased him steadily down. Occasionally a bit of rock gave way beneath his weight and went crashing into the gorge, and his hands were torn and bleeding before he reached the tree. The girl had not fallen more than twenty feet; but the shock had evidently deprived her of consciousness. She lay amid the broken branches, with her eyes closed and head hanging limply over the abyss.

Resting one foot upon a protuberance on the face of the rock and the other on the limb of a tree, Keeth was able to raise her in his arms. She did not stir, and holding her tightly against his breast with his left arm, he fended himself off from the cliff with the other hand and shouted to his comrades to draw him up. He could no longer see where to place his feet, and once or twice swung against the rough wall with cruel force. But he kept his own body between the cliff and his burden, and she was not injured in the least. Before they reached the summit her eyes opened and she gazed up into his face.

"Keep still. Don't move," he said, and although she could not understand the words his voice evidently reassured her. She did not seem frightened, nor struggle, as Keeth expected she would. Instead she lay passive in his arms, although she must have realized their danger.

Then, in a moment, Keeth felt Ford's hands on his shoulders. He was dragged upon the rock, still bearing the girl in his arms, and set her down safely upon her feet. His clothing was torn to rags. His hands were bruised and bleeding and there was a long gash on the side of his face. The girl darted away from them like a startled creature of the wood, evidently unhurt by her fall. But she did not go far, for, finding herself unmolested, she stopped and looked back.

"By Jove, Keeth! you're a sight," cried Ford. "But get into your coat and come on. We must make a break from here."

"What's the matter?" demanded Ronald, still a bit dazed.

"There's Indians about. They may be down on us any minute."

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